REMARKS

CLAIM STATUS

Applicants have cancelled claim 41-64, which are directed to non-elected subject matter. Claim 36 has been withdrawn in view of the April 27, 2010, species election. Accordingly, claims 33-35 and 37-40 are pending for examination on their merits.

Applicants have also amended claim 33 to improve the clarity of the claim. Section 112 support for the amendment can be found in the specification-as-filed, including the claims. Applicants have not amended claim 33 to overcome any of the pending rejections. Nor does the amendment narrow or broaden the scope of the claim.

PRIOR ART REJECTIONS

The Office rejects claims 33, 34, and 37 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Caretta (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0125615) in view of Blickwedel et al. (WO 00/03867) and Midgley et al. (U.S. Patent No. 1,294,928) for the reasons provided on pages 4 to 6; claim 35 as allegedly being unpatentable over Caretta in view of Blickwedel et al. and Midgley et al. further in view of Brewer (U.S. Patent No. 4,620,561) for the reasons provide on pages 6 to 7; and claims 37 to 40 as allegedly being unpatentable over Caretta in view of Blickwedel et al. and Midgley et al. further in view of Oku (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0121324) or Dailliez (U.S. Patent No. 5,622,669) for the reasons provided on pages 7 to 8.

Regarding the primary obviousness rejection of independent claim 33, the Office admits that Caretta fails to disclose "precuring both a liner[1] and a carcass portion of the

[1] The Office is believed to be referring to the claimed "radially internal layer containing elastomer material" when referencing a "liner."

tire in a hermetically sealed chamber prior to the tire vulcanization/ completion step." Office Action, page 4. More clearly, the Office admits that Caretta does not teach:

- closing the toroidal support and the tyre being processed therewith into a hermetically sealed cavity;
- admitting a working fluid into said cavity to press the inner surface of said tyre being processed against the outer surface of said toroidal support;
- supplying heat to said tyre being processed to start vulcanisation of at least one elastomer element of the carcass structure selected from said elastomer filler and said radially internal layer;
- extracting said toroidal support and said tyre being processed from said cavity;
- completing building of the tyre being processed;

However, the Office contends that Blickwedel et al. discloses "a precure operation on the carcass layer in addition to a liner layer (Column 6, lines 67) . . ." and that Midgley et al. discloses "that a fluid pressure pressing the carcass against the rigid support can be supplied through a hermetically sealed container." Office Action, pages 4-5. The Office contends that "one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have found it obvious to perform the carcass and liner pre-curing on the heated support required by the previous combination in a hermetically sealed pressure vessel because this is functionally equivalent to curing in an open air environment (as disclosed by Midgley)." Office Action, pages 5-6. Applicants respectfully disagree and, thus, traverse these rejections.

Contrary to what is suggested by the Office, Midgley et al. does not teach or suggest "admitting a working fluid into said cavity to press the inner surface of said tyre being processed against the outer surface of said toroidal support." Midgley et al. discloses that the preliminary vulcanization step may be performed in "normal atmospheric conditions" or "in an ordinary vulcanization heater, while the casing and core are inclosed in the usual compression molds." Page 2, lines 18-25. Under either operation, there is no working fluid applying pressure. Rather, Midgley et al. only discloses the use of the physical mold to apply pressure (see page 1, lines 45-54, page 1, lines 90-100, page 2, lines 26-28, and page 2, lines 129 - page 3, line 40) or the use of a heat insulation blanket (page 1, lines 57-78 and page 2, lines 56-97).

Accordingly, whether or not there is a basis to combine the teachings as suggested (and Applicants do not agree there is), the combination of teachings does not result in a method comprising "admitting a working fluid into said cavity to press the inner surface of said tyre being processed against the outer surface of said toroidal support."

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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